

when you sat on the back of a boxcar
and smiled for me.
In the photograph you can see
a young girl sitting on a boxcar.
She is pretty and she is smiling
as if the years could not be lost
like Zippo lighters.
Now you're in California
and I wonder
if you still sing "El Paso" to yourself
I wonder if you're out of cigarettes
and I put these things
in a brown envelope addressed to you:
A picture of you where the scars don't show,
part of someone from Cambridge
and a long, cold drink
in a Texas saloon.

7/5/71, Cambridge

-- Joel Deutsch

Berkeley, CA

Red Wing

The wing of a bird
may be translated
from the Chinese
in either red or gold

And I care nothing
for your mysteries
and your fads and diets

For I have seen Freedom
throw a fake fur coat
in the Rio Grande
in a night of Mime
when you were a dream
in your father's eyes

Now I can tell faucets on the sink
not to stare back at me
while the world is wrapped in machinery
with more cables than one's mind can conceive
more layers of metal than nation's proudest peaks
more tons of plastic than marble in the ground

I will give you diaries of invisible beings
who have mined memories
like the metal they chip from mountains
to weigh and make rings of.